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DCI/IC-3004-74
25 October 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Conversation with Fisher Howe

1. Fisher Howe called to request a covert action briefing on 18 November for the Commissioners serving on the intelligence panel of the Murphy Commission. He noted that he would have, hopefully, by that date papers on the subject from Ambassador Belcher, Chet Cooper, and John Bross. He was, therefore, requesting on behalf of the Commission that the Director or his designee brief the five Commissioners on the panel (and any other Commissioners who might wish to attend) on the morning of 18 November in the PFIAB Conference Room. I asked what staff he proposed to have in attendance and he indicated that he would plan to be there along with Reckford and Kent Crane. He also indicated that the Executive Director, Dean Wilcox, might wish to attend as well but that the meeting would be restricted to those indicated.

2. I explained that the Director might wish to have a letter setting down the specifics from Ambassador Murphy. He found no problem with this but reiterated that his call represented an official request. I stated that I would take the matter up with Mr. Colby and be back in touch with him in the course of the day.

3. I then advised that Kent Crane had requested a budget briefing and some suggestion was made that that briefing could be given at the same time as the covert action briefing. I advised that it was difficult for me to understand a need for a comprehensive budget briefing in the context of Ambassador Murphy's letter to the Director and that it would be helpful if we had a better appreciation of what the Commissioners' needs were in this respect. Howe responded that the Commissioners had never asked for such a briefing although they may wish to have one at some point in time. He agreed with me that

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it would be inappropriate to use the hour and a half or so on the 18th to deviate from the purpose of the meeting into budgetary detail. I pointed out that we had extended ourselves as far as we could to accommodate Bob Macy in the preparation of his paper on budget and resources. I noted that while I was not able to comment officially on Bob's paper, having no role in this matter, the document had been brought to my attention by one of his staff. I added that Bob properly did not address specific budgetary figures. Howe advised that he did not feel the Macy paper was responsive and that Bob would probably rework it sometime in the course of November on his return. He generally agreed, however, that specific budgetary data would continue to be excluded. I, in turn, agreed to cooperate in any way we can. I noted that Major Pickett apparently was preparing a paper or comments on the Macy document.

4. In closing, I alerted Howe that any detailed budgetary presentation to the Commissioners would obviously require clearances by the Director and our Congressional Committees.

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[redacted]

Associate Deputy to the DCI
for the Intelligence Community

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ADDENDUM:

The Director has been advised of the foregoing. A letter has been requested from the Commission formalizing the request. Howe has been advised that DCI will be responsive, but for reasons of delicacy, the briefing will be given in general terms and where specifics are required, these will be given only the particular Commissioners requiring the detail. I also registered concern over four staffers and invited Howe to handle this matter singularly if possible. On receipt of the letter from the Commission, we will plan to respond to it along the foregoing lines.

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